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Communications

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'Ethics and the Environment' was Theme for Two-Day Event



Members of the team that competed in the NCICU Ethics Bowl were, from left, Darby Yates, Artur Hofer, Taylor Mills and Margaret Smith. They won three out of four rounds at the event.

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—A team from Gardner-Webb University recently participated in the Eighth Annual Ethics Bowl hosted by North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities (NCICU). The two-day event was held at the North Carolina Legislative complex in Raleigh. The GWU students debated topics related to “Ethics and the Environment” and won three out of four rounds.

Team members were Artur Hofer, of Boiling Springs, N.C., a junior youth discipleship major, Margaret Smith, of Jacksonville, Fla., a junior worship leadership major, Taylor Mills, of Buies Creek, N.C., a sophomore psychology major and Darby Yates, of Hickory, N.C., a sophomore biology major. The campus coordinators were Dr. Perry Hildreth, professor of philosophy, and Dr. Anna Sieges Beal, assistant professor of religious studies.

“Our students performed exceptionally,” Hildreth observed. “They represented the very best of what it means to be a Gardner-Webb student. In each competition the students explained beautifully how our motto, ‘Pro Deo et Humanitate,’ (For God and Humanity) connected to our responsibility to care for the environment.”

The GWU team debated on the Paris Climate Agreement, Keystone Pipeline and fracking. In the surprise round, they discussed the idea of a river receiving personhood under the law. Yates, who participated in the Ethics Bowl last year, enjoyed the challenge of arguing this interesting topic. “It forced our team to work together,” she explained.

Hofer and the rest of the team attended the event for the first time. “The thrill of debating and competing against others was a great feeling,” Hofer shared. “The hardest part was definitely saying my part of the debate perfectly and making sure to pick my words carefully.”

Mills appreciated the whole experience. “I learned how to speak eloquently to make an argument, to stick with the points I made and defend them well, no matter what the other team says,” she reflected. “I loved how the teams are nice and courteous to each other, and everyone wants the others to do well and have a great time. I was also able to grow closer with my friends as we had the long car ride up there and back.”

Sieges Beal noted that the event gave GWU students an opportunity to interact with other students from across the state and receive feedback from the civic and business leaders who served as judges. “We had state legislators, judges, lawyers, small business owners, philanthropists, lobbyists, business men and women, educators, etc. who came to make the event meaningful for our students,” she elaborated.

North Carolina Independent Colleges & Universities is the statewide office of North Carolina’s 36 independent colleges and universities. NCICU represents independent higher education in the areas of state and federal public policy and raises funds for student scholarships and enrichment experiences. For more information about NCICU, visit www.ncicu.org.

Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university that prepares students to become critical thinkers, effective leaders and compassionate servants in the global community. Emphasizing a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics, Gardner-Webb is a place where Christian conviction meets intellectual freedom. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.